

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, GE

SUBJECT: CZECH ARTIST AND "HOLOCAUST"

1. PROFESSOR LEO HAAS, A CZECH NATIONAL WHO HAS LIVED IN THE GDR FOR TWENTY-THREE YEARS, CALLED ON THE PAO ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE CZECH CULTURAL ATTACHE. HAAS SPENT MANY YEARS IN NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS, THE LAST SIX, PRIOR TO LIBERATION, IN AUSCHWITZ. WHILE AT TERESIENSTADT (TEREZEN), HE ORGANIZED AN ARTISTS' RESISTANCE WHICH WAS WRITTEN UP IN A VOLUME ENTITLED "THE ARTISTS AT TEREZEN," BY GERALD GREEN, PUBLISHED IN 1969 BY HAWTHORNE BOOKS, CONTAINING TEXT AND REPRODUCTIONS OF HAAS' AND OTHER ARTISTS' WORKS, ALL OF WHOM ARE NOW DEAD. HAAS SAYS HE WAS NEVER CONSULTED BY EITHER GREEN OR HAWTHORNE ON THE RIGHTS OF REPRODUCTION, AND WAS NOT SENT A COPY OF THE BOOK BY THEM. HE FINALLY DID GET A COPY FROM HIS BROTHER IN ISRAEL, AND HE INSTITUTED A PROCEEDING AGAINST HAWTHORNE, AND \$8,000 WAS AWARDED TO HIS SON, LIVING IN THE U.S.

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2. COMING TO THE PRESENT AND HIS REASON FOR VISITING THE EMBASSY, HAAS MAINTAINS THAT IN THE PREPARATION OF THE NBC PROGRAM ABOUT THE NAZI PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS ENTITLED "HOLOCAUST," ALSO WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY GERALD GREEN, HIS RIGHTS WERE ONCE AGAIN ABUSED. HAAS CLAIMS THAT IN 1976 HE GRANTED AN EXTENSIVE INTERVIEW TO SWEDISH TELEVISION, WHICH, HE HAS HEARD FROM SWEDISH TV, WAS USED

BY GREEN IN DEPICTING HIS MAIN CHARACTER, KARL WEISS, WHO IS IN FACT HAAS, ACCORDING TO HAAS. "I AM INFORMED THAT EVERYTHING I SAID IN THAT INTERVIEW HAS BEEN USED, WITHOUT MY PERMISSION."

3. HAAS HANDED OVER THE APRIL 15-21 ISSUE OF TV GUIDE, MAILED BY A FRIEND IN NEW YORK, WHICH FEATURES ON ITS COVER A REPRODUCTION OF ONE OF HIS GRAPHICS, A COPY OF WHICH HE HAD BROUGHT IN A LARGE PORTFOLIO. "ONCE AGAIN, THIS WAS USED WITHOUT MY PERMISSION." HAAS SAYS THE SWEDES WHO HAVE SEEN "HOLOCAUST" CLAIM THERE ARE REPRODUCTIONS OF MORE HAAS GRAPHICS, PERHAPS TAKEN FROM GREEN'S BOOK, IN THE SERIES.

4. HAAS EXPRESSED HIS OPPOSITION AS FOLLOWS: "I AM PROUD TO BE PARTICIPATING IN SOMETHING WHICH EXPOSES THE TRUTH ABOUT FASCISM, BUT I AM TROUBLED BY HOW IT WAS DONE. THIS IS AFTER ALL MY ARTISTIC PROPERTY, AND I FEEL I SHOULD BE COMPENSATED. REMEMBER THAT ZDF--SECOND GERMAN TELEVISION--HAS PURCHASED 'HOLOCAUST' AND IT WILL BE SEEN THROUGHOUT THE FRG AND THE GDR. I THINK I SHOULD BE PROTECTED."

5. ASKED WHAT SPECIFICALLY HE WISHED, HAAS SAID HE FELT JUSTIFIED IN DEMANDING REIMBURSEMENT FOR TV GUIDE'S USE ON ITS COVER OF ONE OF HIS GRAPHICS ON THE BASIS OF RE-PRODUCTION RIGHTS; AND SECOND, HE FELT JUSTIFIED IN RE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUESTING COMPENSATION FOR "HOLOCAUST'S" USE OF HIS INTERVIEW WITH SWEDISH TV AND FOR ANY PRINTS USED.

6. PAO EXPLAINED THAT THE EMBASSY COULD NOT BECOME EMBROILED IN A MATTER INVOLVING A FOREIGN NATIONAL AND A PRIVATE AMERICAN FIRM, BUT COULD TRANSMIT THE INFORMATION WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT IT WOULD BE CONVEYED TO THE PARTIES CONCERNED. EMBASSY REQUESTS ADVISE ON PROCEDURE.
BOLEN

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Message Attributes

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